



National Aeronautics and  
Space Administration  
**Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center**  
Houston, Texas



## New name

The Safety page has a new name after more than 2,000 employees voted in the final election. Story on Page 3.



## Antarctic astronauts

Scientists living in the Antarctic region help JSC researchers study isolation behavior. Story on Page 5.

# Space News Roundup

Vol. 35

January 26, 1996

No. 3

## Goldin names Abbey JSC director

George Abbey has been named JSC director effective immediately, NASA Administrator Daniel S. Goldin announced Tuesday.

"George Abbey is uniquely qualified to lead the Johnson team into the future," Goldin said. "Over the course of his eminent career with NASA, he has distinguished himself as an innovator and pioneer at all levels of agency management."

Abbey had been serving as acting director at JSC since August 1995. His career in federal service spans

over 40 years. His career with NASA began in 1967.

After being detailed to the newly opened Manned Spacecraft Center in 1964, Abbey resigned from the Air Force and joined the center's staff in 1967 as technical assistant to the manager, Apollo Spacecraft Program. He was assigned as technical assistant to the director in 1969.

From January 1976 to March 1985, Abbey served as director of flight operations, responsible for operational planning as well as over-

all direction and management of flight crew and flight control activities for all human space flight missions. In March, 1985, he became the director of the newly-formed Flight Crew Operations organization responsible for the selection, management and direction of flight crews as well as center aircraft operations.

Abbey was appointed deputy associate administrator for space flight at NASA Headquarters in March 1988. Beginning in July 1990, he served as deputy for operations

and senior NASA representative to the Synthesis Group chaired by Lt. Gen. Thomas Stafford and charged with defining strategies for returning to the Moon and landing on Mars. In July 1991, Abbey was appointed senior director for civil space policy for the National Space Council, Executive Office of the President. He served in this capacity until appointed special assistant to the administrator of NASA in April 1992. He was named deputy director of JSC in January, 1994.



George W.S. Abbey



President Bill Clinton welcomes home the STS-72 crew at Ellington Field. Also from left are, JSC Director George Abbey, a Secret Service agent, Mission Specialists Dan Barry, Winston Scott and Koichi Wakata, Pilot Brent Jett, Mission Specialist Leroy Chiao and Commander Brian Duffy.

JSC Photo by Mark Sowa

## President greets *Endeavour* crew at Ellington Field

By Karen Schmidt

When the STS-72 crew returned to Ellington Field Saturday, they were greeted by a surprise visitor, President Bill Clinton.

"I am so glad that I happen to be in Houston and at the airport at the right time," Clinton said to the crowd that had gathered to welcome home the six astronauts. "On behalf of the people of the United States, we are very proud of this mission proud of this crew, we were thrilled by its success and we're glad to have them home."

Clinton took a few moments to congratulate the agency for its cooperative efforts and its scientific successes.

"Our space program is an important part of our partnership for world peace. It is an important part of how we relate to and work with the Japanese, the Russians and others in building a more cooperative, safer world."

"Our space program also is an important part of research we do in trying to solve medical and environmental mysteries," he added. "NASA

has been a major, major force in helping us to figure out ways to save our planet Earth as we accommodate more population and economic growth. So I ask all of you, remain steadfast in support for America's investment in space and in our future together with our fiends and allies through out the world," Clinton said.



ENDEAVOUR

See related story on Page 6

STS-72 Commander Brian Duffy was overwhelmed by the reception. "Wow," he began. "What a flight, what a mission. I think the work we did over the last nine days will continue well into the future. This flight can best be summed up by the word—teamwork. It began right from the start, when the NASA and the NASDA folks were getting together and reached its apex during this last week when the ground team did just an great job," Duffy said.

*Endeavour's* commander praised team members in Houston and Florida as well as Japan. Pilot Brent Jett reflected on how he had to learn to do basics in space. "For a first time Please see **ROOKIES**, Page 6

## Columbia moves to pad next week

By James Hartsfield

With *Endeavour* home after a virtually flawless start to the new year, activities at Kennedy Space Center remain on schedule readying *Columbia* for the second mission of 1996, a launch of STS-75 in targeted for about Feb. 22.

*Columbia* was moved to the Vehicle Assembly Bldg. to be mated with the STS-75 solid rockets and fuel tank late Tuesday, and the shuttle is scheduled to be moved to KSC's Launch Pad 39B Monday.

The Tethered Satellite System, one of the primary cargoes for *Columbia*, was hauled to the launch pad in a payload canister Thursday.

The STS-75 crew—Commander Andy Allen; Pilot Scott Horowitz; Payload Commander Franklin Chiang-Diaz; Mission Specialists Jeff Hoffman, Claude Nicollier and Maurizio Cheli; and Payload Specialist Umberto Guidoni—are scheduled to travel to KSC Thursday and Friday for a dress rehearsal of the launch countdown. Shuttle managers plan to meet on Feb. 9 for a review of all mission preparations, following which a firm launch date will be announced.

In addition to a reflight of TSS, STS-75 will carry the United States Microgravity Platform-3 for a 14-day flight.

Following its weekend landing from STS-72, an inspection of

*Endeavour* found the spacecraft in good condition, with minimal damage from debris during its flight. This week, work has begun to remove the Japanese Space Flyer Unit satellite from the cargo bay as well as NASA's OAST-Flyer satellite.

Next up after *Columbia* will be Atlantis on STS-76, the third shuttle-Mir docking mission, planned to launch in mid-March. *Atlantis* is now in KSC's Bay 1 shuttle processing hangar.

Work this week on Atlantis included installation of the tunnel adapter, installation of the main engines, and installation of the docking system. Also, in the VAB, stacking of the STS-76 solid rockets has been completed.

## Veteran astronauts selected for STS-80, STS-83 missions

By Kyle Herring

An experienced team of astronauts has been assigned to the STS-80 mission and two astronauts have been assigned to STS-83, a 16-day microgravity experiment mission.

Ken Cockrell will command the third flight of the Wake Shield Facility aboard *Columbia* scheduled for November 1996. He will be joined on the flight by Pilot Ken Rominger and Mission Specialists Tammy Jernigan, Tom Jones and Story Musgrave. In addition, Janice Voss and Don Thomas, have been named payload commander and mission specialist,

respectively, for the long-duration microgravity science laboratory flight of *Columbia* scheduled for spring 1997. The commander, pilot, flight engineer and payload specialists will be named at a later date.

STS-80 will mark the third flight of the WSF that flew on STS-60 and STS-69 and the second flight of the Orbiting Retrievable Far and Extreme Ultraviolet Spectrometer satellite. Both satellites will be deployed and retrieved during the mission. The saucer-shaped WSF is designed to fly free of the shuttle,

Please see **STS-80**, Page 6



Ken Cockrell

## Chronicle lauds NASA work

[Editor's note: This is a reprint, with permission, of a Jan. 12 *Houston Chronicle Publishing Co.* editorial. All rights are reserved.]

Critics of the U.S. space program come in two schools: those who say NASA is run by a bunch of reckless cowboys with insufficient regard for safety and fiscal restraint, and those who believe the agency is just another corrupt and wasteful bureaucracy, led by stodgy administrators who lack the resourcefulness to live within a budget and the daring to make further conquests in outer space.

NASA is certainly an imperfect enterprise, but despite the grumblers, NASA's hits just keep on coming.

The launch of the space shuttle *Endeavour* on Thursday cements the growing U.S. Japanese relationship in space. If all goes well on Saturday, *Endeavour's* crew of five Americans and one Japanese will retrieve a Japanese satellite with an array of experiments, including two frozen newts (no relation to the House speaker) and their eggs.

This shuttle mission is all-purpose, retrieving one satellite and releasing

another. But the overriding task is to exercise the international cooperation needed to deploy and operate the permanent U.S. space station.

On recent flights, shuttles have docked spectacularly with the Russian Mir space station. NASA's repaired Hubble telescope has been sending back mind-boggling images of the most distant objects in the cosmos. Last month, NASA's Galileo spacecraft went into orbit around Jupiter after sending a smaller probe on a suicide mission into the massive planet's turbulent atmosphere.

Looking to the future, the space agency has announced plans for a new generation of miniature space probes that will be able to explore the edges of the solar system at a fraction of the cost of their predecessors. Those savings will enable NASA to balance its manned and unmanned efforts when the deployment of the space station begins to gobble much of its funding.

At a time when the federal government is held in low repute, the space agency is showing it can make significant progress while tightening its belt. How many other federal agencies could make the same claim?